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REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated January 11, 2006. Claims 1-27 were pending. The Examiner's allowance of Claims 18-27 is acknowledged. By this Amendment, claims 3 and 16 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1, 5, 7, 8, 11, and 13 have been amended. More specifically, independent claim 1 has been amended to include a feature which was recited in now-canceled claim 3. No new subject matter or new issues have been introduced. Therefore, entry of this Amendment is requested. Accordingly, claims 1-2, 4-15, and 17-27 are now pending in this application, with claims 1, 18 and 23 being in independent form.

Claims 1-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,950,207 to Mortimore et al. Claims 1-17 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,971,923 to Finger.

Independent claim 1, as amended, relates to communication of medical information which includes both image data and bone mineral density (BMD) values and/or quantitative morphometry values. This medical information may be generated, for example, by a bone densitometer. A physician typically considers such quantitative data along with the scanned image,

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to assess the patient's condition.

The DICOM standard was developed to standardize communication of medical images in electronic form. However, the above-mentioned DICOM standard does not address the communication of medical information that includes both image data and bone mineral density (BMD) values and/or quantitative morphometry values.

Applicant devised techniques for generating a composite file which can include both image data and bone mineral density (BMD) values and/or quantitative morphometry values.

Independent claim 1 of the present application is directed to a method for generating a DICOM compatible file which comprises medical information including bone mineral density (BMD) values and/or quantitative morphometry values and image data. The method includes performing an image acquisition of at least a portion of a patient to be examined, generating image data based on the performed acquisition, generating bone mineral density (BMD) values and/or quantitative morphometry values based on the performed acquisition, and constructing a composite file. The image data is provided in an image data field of the composite file and the bone mineral density (BMD) values and/or quantitative morphometry values are provided in a field of the composite file other than the image data field.

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The cited art does not disclose or suggest that image data is provided in an image data field of the composite file and the bone mineral density (BMD) values and/or quantitative morphometry values are provided in another field of the composite file, as provided by the claimed invention of claim 1.

Mortimore, as understood by the Applicant, is directed to a computer-based multimedia medical database management system and user interface for managing image data such as from a CT imaging device which may generate image data in a file structure such as DICOM v3.0.

The claimed invention of amended claim 1 of the present application is patentably distinct from Mortimore because BMD values and quantitative morphometry values are provided by the bone densitometer as a direct output of the scan. In contrast, in the system of Mortimore, only the image data is a direct result of the scan and the additional data such as lab results, clinical notes, and the like, are manually-entered commentary and other patient information not directly attributable to the scan.

Finger, as understood by Applicant, is directed to processing of ultrasound data. Finger discloses that the image data can be compressed based on a full screen compression scheme such as the DICOM (Packbits) compression

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scheme.

Applicant does not find teaching or suggestion in Finger, however, of a method for generating a DICOM compatible file which comprises medical information including BMD values and/or quantitative morphometry values and image data, wherein image data is provided in an image data field of the composite file and BMD values and/or quantitative morphometry values are provided in another field of the composite file, as provided by the claimed invention of claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent claim 1 is patentably distinct from the cited art. Dependent claims 2-17 are believed to be patentably distinct from the cited art, for at least similar reasons.

In view of the claim amendments and remarks hereinabove, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance, and earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of


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this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to
call the undersigned attorney.

Allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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